

King County Auditor's Office

Kymber Waltmunson, King County Auditor



King County

DATE: July 31, 2015

TO: Metropolitan King County Councilmembers

FROM: Kymber Waltmunson, King County Auditor

SUBJECT: Second follow-up on the 2013 Performance Audit of Environmental Health Services

The Environmental Health Services Division (EHS) has implemented a rigorous staffing methodology for the entire division. The division's improved staffing approach incorporates best practices and enables a staff allocation process based on workload analysis and performance standards. This memo serves as the auditor's report that EHS has fully implemented Recommendation #5 (see full text in the implementation table below) of our 2013 performance audit of the division, as required by the Council-adopted Ordinance 17941 (Section 98, P2).

In addition, EHS has re-evaluated the policy of having a unified rate and received a recommendation from the Board of Health to adopt two separate rates. This addresses the fee equity and efficiency concerns we raised in our 2013 audit and satisfies the intent of Recommendation #2 (see full text in the implementation table below).

We will follow up on the remaining three outstanding recommendations in 2016 based on their expected implementation schedule.

Of the two audit recommendations we reviewed on this follow-up:

DONE	2	Recommendations have been fully implemented Auditor will no longer monitor
PROGRESS	0	Recommendations are in progress or partially implemented Auditor will continue to monitor
OPEN	0	Recommendations remain unresolved Auditor will continue to monitor

Please see below for details on the implementation status of these recommendations.

Implementation Status as of July 2015

#	Quick Status	Recommendation	Status Detail
2	DONE	EHS should re-evaluate the policy of having a unified rate and make recommendations to the Board of Health for modifications needed to address fee equity and efficiency.	EHS conducted a re-evaluation of the unified rate based on a consultant's rate study. The rate study provided program-specific cost and time study analyses and reviewed fee equity and efficiency for different rate structures. Based on findings from the rate study and recommendations from EHS, the Board of Health decided to establish two separate rates for the division. The two rates designate two operational sections: Food and Facilities Section and Community Environmental Health Section. This modification improves EHS's ability to charge fees equitably and efficiently for programs with significant differences in operating costs, code enforcement requirements, and management structure.
5	DONE	EHS should implement a rigorous approach to staff allocations addressing the four best practice factors we identified which include a defined staffing methodology with staffing standards and performance measures related to caseloads and workloads.	<p>EHS has incorporated best practices in implementing a rigorous staff allocation process. Since our review in 2014, EHS has applied findings from the rate study and Food Program Review to develop a guidance document for making staffing decisions. The guidance document provides key questions and criteria for assessing and justifying staffing needs. In addition, EHS has revised human resources processes, developed new tools, and adopted new policies and procedures for position requests based on workload definition and consideration of alternatives. EHS also conducted additional program reviews to identify tasks, document processes, and develop standard metrics for workloads.</p> <p>EHS has indicated a commitment to continuous improvement that will be necessary to ensure that the division attains a mature and sustainable staffing methodology for the long-term.</p>

Chelsea Lei, Management Auditor, and Elise Garvey, Management Auditor, conducted this review. Please contact Chelsea Lei at 477-6523, or me at 477-1043 if you have any questions about the issues discussed in this letter.

cc: Dow Constantine, King County Executive
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